



# Laois Public Participation Network

## June 2022 Newsletter

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## NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR



Laois PPN in collaboration with our long term partner, Laois County Council are delighted to announce the launch of the 2022 Laois Community & Voluntary Awards, to acknowledge groups and individuals who, through their commitment to voluntary and community activities, have played a significant role in enhancing the quality of life in their communities.

### Categories for 2022:

**Arts, Culture & Heritage** – which recognises Groups/Organisations who enhance their local areas, by conserving, protecting and promoting the Arts, Culture and Heritage of their local community through collective creative activities. Examples include: Drama, Music, Literature, Arts, Festivals, Conservation, and Heritage.

**Sports Award** – which focuses on groups or schools, who have focused on physical health, increasing the number of people participating in the sport, particularly those with a low participation rate.

**Best Kept Residential Area** - which recognises the hard work and dedication shown in residential areas throughout Laois, recognises the great pride people have in their own communities, recognise the value of our biodiversity and continued to put in a huge effort, on behalf of the places where they live.

**Social Inclusion** - which recognises Groups/Organisations that actively work in a supportive role in their communities and whose aim is to minimise social exclusion and/or help to improve the quality of life for socially excluded groups. Examples include; Working with the elderly, People with Disabilities, Ethnic Minority, Travelling Community, Young people in transition, LGBTI+ and the Homeless.

**Health and Well Being** - which recognises community health and wellbeing initiatives i.e mental health, sexual health, awareness raising & promotion around medical conditions, disorders and disabilities, including opportunities for social connections, increased meaningful daily activities, developing confidence and providing a sense of purpose & positive self-worth for citizens in the community.

**[CLICK HERE](#)**  
**[for the Community Awards](#)**  
**[Nomination Form 2022](#)**

**Winners receive €500 while runners-up receive €250. So, go ahead and get nominating your local community and voluntary groups and individuals.**

## Unsung Hero Award

You can also make an individual nomination for an *Unsung Hero* Award, for an outstanding contribution by one person, to Community and Voluntary life in their local area and/or the wider community in County Laois.

[CLICK HERE](#)  
[for the Unsung Hero Award](#)  
[Nomination Form 2022](#)

**New!**

## Junior Volunteer of the Year

Recognises the outstanding contribution that an individual under the age of 18, has made to their local community. Every community has individuals who are boundless in their energy and determination to get things done – so nominate your Junior Volunteer of the Year who encourage, support, lead and inspire others in your community.

[CLICK HERE](#)  
[for the Junior Volunteer of the Year](#)  
[Nomination Form 2022](#)

For further information on the Terms & Conditions, please call 057-8664078 or email [awards@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:awards@laoiscoco.ie)

**Closing Date for receipt of Nominations:**

**Friday, 29th July, 2022 at 4:00pm**

[All nominations forms can also be filled out on the](#)  
[Laois County Council website](#)



**A special thanks to this years sponsor People First Credit Union and media partner, Leinster Express.**



*Nina Horan Laois PPN Secretariat Chair said "Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless." (Sherry Anderson).*

*To volunteer of your time is an intriguing act of selflessness. It signifies obvious qualities such as empathy and benevolence. However, when you drill down, it is actually also about proactivity: volunteers not only see a need in their community, they act to do something about it. That is what makes the substantive difference in the lives of others.*

*We all benefit from this unique and dynamic combination of characteristics, whether directly or indirectly. For instance, from enjoying local St Patrick's Day parades, through to the work of organisations such as The Tidy Towns, our lives are brightened and our environments made prettier. The benefits cannot be overstated.*

*It is true- volunteers and community group members don't get paid. Nevertheless, it doesn't mean we cannot award their pricelessness. So, Laois PPN in conjunction with Laois County Council is delighted to play a part in singing their praises at the 2022 Laois Community and Voluntary Awards. Whose song will be sung? Nominations are now open!"*



# SPORTS CAPITAL GRANT DRAWDOWN WORKSHOP

**A record €3.5 million under the Sports Capital Projects scheme has been given to a total of 61 Laois Sports Clubs. The funding will benefit Sports Clubs and Communities across Laois. The funding is for a range of development work being carried out by various clubs and groups – including astroturf, floodlights, pitch development and walking tracks.**

Laois PPN in collaboration with the Sports Section of Laois County Council held “The Sports Capital Grant Drawdown Workshop” on Tuesday June 28 in the Council Chamber, Laois County Council.

The workshop was delivered by Ann Marie Maher, Sports & Leisure Officer, Laois County Council.

The workshop focused on ensuring that Clubs maximise their full allocation and draw down of the grant.

It also covered the process involved in the draw down of the grant support and the financial requirements of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media for acquiring the funding.

Martina O’Moore from Clann Credo was in attendance on the night. Martina provided information to groups in relation to bridging finance for their projects.



Dan Bergin, Laois PPN Resource Worker said: "Laois PPN provide regular updates on funding opportunities to our 650 members groups and are delighted that a record number of 61 Clubs across Laois will benefit from Sports Capital Grants. The funding will upgrade facilities of Clubs all over the County. Laois PPN wish all Clubs every success with their projects which will benefit their local community. Laois PPN wish to extend our thanks to Ann Marie Maher for sharing her knowledge and experience."



Ann Marie Maher, Sports and Leisure Officer Laois County Council said: "Laois County Council are delighted to support clubs through grant application and drawdown process."

Photos: Denis Byrne

# MRPPN MEETING

The meeting of the Midlands Regional PPN (MRPPN) took place on Thursday 30th June in Naas, hosted by Kildare PPN. The MRPPN allows the PPN's of the Midlands to share information and work in collaboration on projects and policies.

In attendance for Laois PPN was Dan Bergin - Resource Worker, Diane Seale - Support Worker and the Secretariat Members; Paddy Buggy and Nina Horan.



**Nina Horan Laois PPN Secretariat Chair said**

*"Meeting face-to-face is so valuable. We had really interesting presentations from Westmeath and Offaly, and engaged in constructive discussion afterwards. We at Laois PPN wish to take this opportunity to thank Gráinne Flemming and her team in Kildare PPN for their hospitality and professionalism."*

*Nina Horan Laois PPN Secretariat Chair said "Laois PPN Secretariat members Paddy Buggy and Nina Horan took the opportunity to introduce their colleagues to a new concept which they believe will facilitate greater communication, enhanced participation and diversity. Their innovative app called "Represent" looks set to tick all the boxes!"*

*Based on research they carried out, and against a backdrop of key takeaways from the recent "Structural Review of the Public Participation Network - Report" (Commissioned by the Department of Rural & Community Development), Paddy and Nina's presentation prompted enthusiastic and positive feedback from the group. The consensus is "watch this space". We hope to be bringing you more on this in the coming months."*



# HOUSING PRESENTATION

**Laois PPN's proposal of timber homes as a possible solution to the housing crisis was presented to the Housing Regeneration & Planning SPC on Tuesday 14th June.**

The Laois PPN proposal was presented by Paddy Buggy, Laois PPN Secretariat Member. The benefits of timber homes include that they are environmentally friendly, fast turnaround time and cheaper to build than concrete houses.

Timber homes are popular in Scandinavia and USA where 90% of homes are built with timber.



*Paddy Buggy, Laois PPN Secretariat Member said "Laois PPN wish to thank Laois County Council for the opportunity to present our proposal to the Housing & Planning SPC. Looking forward to our proposal on timber homes being considered as part of the solution."*



# THANK YOU TO OUR LAOIS SPORTS PARTNERSHIP REPS



**Laois PPN would like to thank Eibhlin Smith and Marion Condren for their representation of Laois PPN on the Laois Sports Partnership Committee.**

Laois PPN appreciates all the time, commitment and contribution Eibhlin and Marion given on behalf of our member groups over the past 7 years and extend our gratitude for the hard work they have put in.

*Eibhlin Smith said "I am very proud to have Chaired Laois Sports Partnership for the last five years and also as a member of the board for two previous years. I would like to thank the members of the Board, the executive, the FARC and the Coordinator of Laois Sports Partnership Caroline Myers and her team for all their work.*

*I implemented two Strategies as Chairperson for Sport in Laois Sports Partnership and a Governance Code during my tenure, including setting up a new Finance Audit and Risk Committee. We had a vision as a Board for Laois Sports Partnership and we set out to achieve this and I am proud to say we succeeded. COVID19 had a huge impact on how we worked and the work did continue through this time. The Chairperson is a pivotal role and the Board is not about one individual we are all volunteers and as a team we had a great seven years together. Thank you to the Board for their work and dedication and also to the other members who have served their seven years with me, Marian O Boyle (Second level Schools), Marian Condron (PPN) and Karen Phelan (Primary Schools). "*



# LAUNCH OF FORT PROTECTOR CONSERVATION PLAN

**A major new plan to guide the conservation and presentation of the 16th Century Fort Protector at the heart of Portlaoise has been launched.**

The plan, which was created in a partnership between Laois Heritage Society and Laois County Council, with the support of the Heritage Council, builds upon several years of research, consultation and community engagement by a team led by Conservation Architect Richard McLoughlin in association with archaeologist Eoin Sullivan and Historian Diarmuid Wheeler.



*Launching the Portlaoise Fort Protector Conservation Plan.  
Photo: Alf Harvey.*

[\*\*CLICK HERE\*\*  
to learn more](#)

# PORTLAOISE TIDY TOWNS RECEIVE NATIONAL AWARD

The committee of Portlaoise Tidy Towns working in partnership with Laois County Council has received an award from the Adopt Monument Scheme of the Heritage Council, in recognition of their tremendous work in the conservation of Old St Peter's Graveyard at the heart of historic Portlaoise.



*Gerry Browne, Chairman Portlaoise Tidy Towns; Catherine Casey, Laois Heritage Officer; Patricia Lodge representing the late Cllr Jerry Lodge; Dr Sharon Greene, Abarta Heritage and Vincent Booth, Laois PPN Secretariat Member and Secretary of Portlaoise Tidy Towns . Photo: Alf Harvey.*

**Vincent Booth, Laois PPN Secretariat Member & Secretary of Portlaoise Tidy Towns said "Portlaoise Tidy Towns were delighted to have been involved in this important conservation project in partnership with Laois County Council, the Heritage Council and Adopt a Monument Scheme. It's great to see one of the oldest structures in Portlaoise now accessible to local people and tourists. I'd like to give a special mention to our late Chairman Jerry Lodge who started the ball rolling on this project along with the then committee. St. Peter's church and graveyard is now conserved for this generation and future one's to enjoy."**

# TAKE PART IN HERITAGE WEEK



Heritage  
Officer  
Programme



## Organise A Heritage Week Event!

National Heritage Week 2022 is taking place **13th - 21st August 2022**. The National Heritage Week website is now open to register your event for this year. Go to [www.heritageweek.ie](http://www.heritageweek.ie) and follow the steps to get your event registered online now.

There is a huge range of events already registered for National Heritage Week and everyone in Laois is being encouraged to take part.



**[CLICK HERE](#)**  
to learn more about  
National Heritage  
Week events  
happening in Laois



# AGE FRIENDLY STRATEGY PUBLIC CONSULTATION



## Laois Age Friendly Strategy

WE NEED YOUR VOICE  
TO SHAPE OUR FUTURE

Public Consultation in Bloom HQ , Mountrath on 26th July  
followed by Lunch, Activities & Dancing  
Registration from 10.30am. Starts at 11am

Free Entry

Laois County Council are holding a Public Consultation on the new Laois Age Friendly Strategy on **Tuesday 26th July 2022** starting at 10:30am at Bloom HQ in Mountrath. Refreshments will be served on arrival and lunch will be provided before the afternoon activities, followed by dancing.

This is a free event. Numbers are limited and pre booking is required.

Please contact Tom Curran on 05786 64150 / 086 0363426 or [agefriendly@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:agefriendly@laoiscoco.ie) to learn more and to book your place.

# FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: MITIGATING AGAINST EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE

## FUND (MAEDF)

LOETB are accepting applications for the Mitigating against Educational Disadvantage Fund 2022. This initiative was very successful last year and provided funding to many Community Groups.

**Closing date: 22nd July 2022, 12:00 midday**



**loetb**  
**Community Groups**  
Call for funding applications 2022

**LOETB are now accepting applications for the Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund 2022 (MAEDF)**

MAEDF aims to provide funding to support educationally disadvantaged learners. The fund is available to interested Community Groups across Laois and Offaly.

**Further information and the application form are available from [www.loetb.ie/learnersupports](http://www.loetb.ie/learnersupports) or scan here!**



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To learn more and to apply.  
**CLICK HERE**



# FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: IRELAND COMMUNITY PLAY FUND



Build a world of play

Create playful experiences for children

*De*

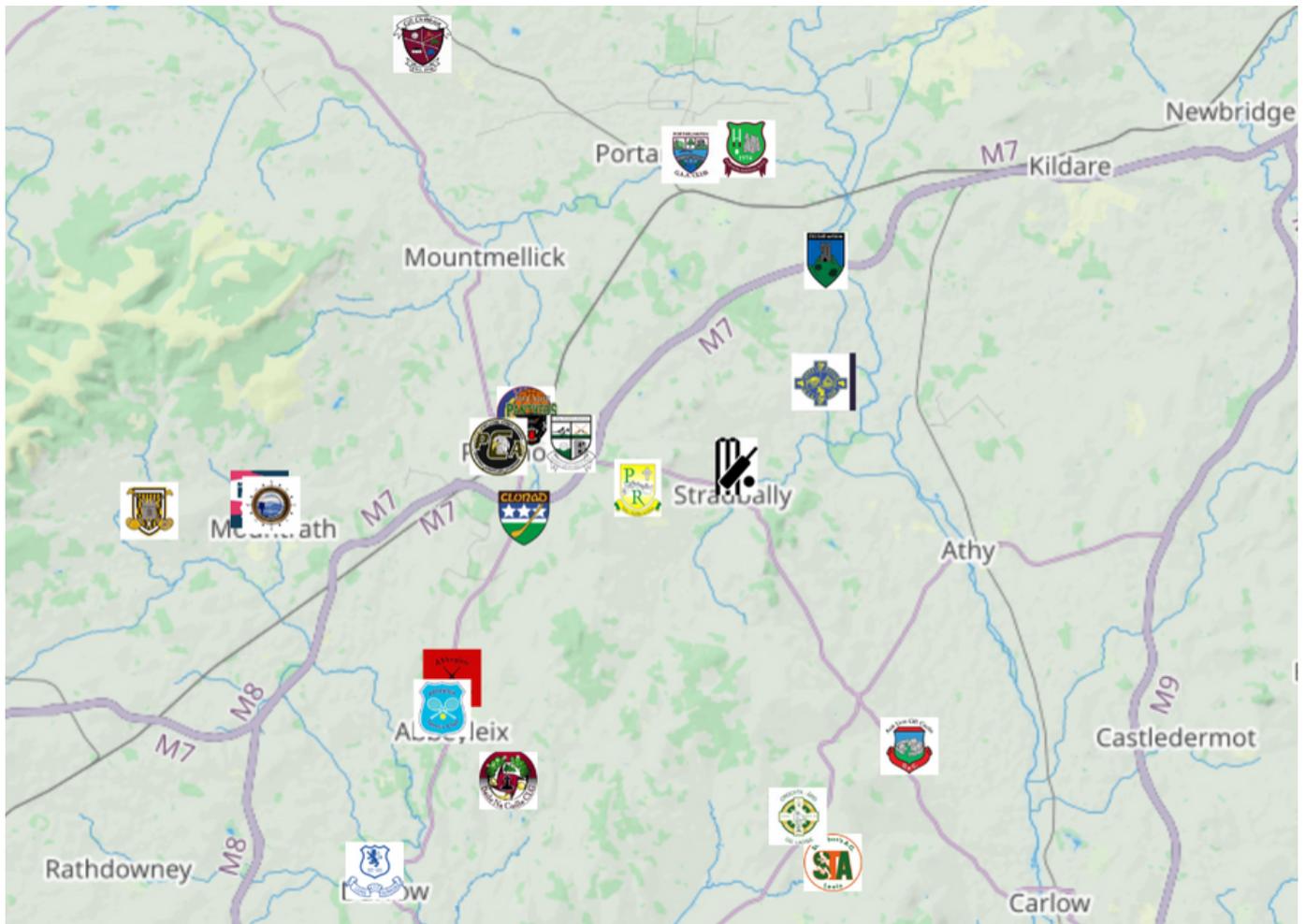
change X

**Community engagement platform ChangeX, supported by the LEGO Foundation, has launched a €80,000 fund to enable communities across Ireland to start proven learning through play projects.**

The Ireland Community Play Fund aims to support up to 35 teams across Ireland to start new community projects. Groups can choose from a carefully-curated portfolio of 13 proven play ideas.

**[For more information and to apply](#)  
[CLICK HERE](#)**

# SPORTS CLUBS AND YOUTH CLUBS WELCOMING UKRAINIAN NATIONALS



Dan Bergin Laois PPN Resource worker said  
*“Laois PPN recognise's the positive physical and mental health benefits of sport and the key role sport and youth clubs can play in supporting people in particular children to integrate in our communities in Laois. Thanks to Sports & Youth Clubs across Laois for supporting this mapping initiative and their warm welcome to Ukrainian Nationals into our communities”*



[CLICK HERE](#)  
TO VIEW THE MAP

# KILLEEN COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

Killeen Community Group are hosting two fun events on Saturday 23rd July 2022.



## 1 - Killeen Kids Festival

This fun and exciting children's event will take place in Killeen Community Hall. Come along to watch the wonderful family friendly movie 'Sing 2'. On the day there will be also a disco, sweet treats and face painting.

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more and to buy tickets

## 2 - "A Night Under the Stars" Killeen Community Festival

This is an over 18's event with a festival and rustic feel. Come along and enjoy delicious BBQ food and a movie on the night.

[CLICK HERE](#)  
to learn more and to buy  
tickets



# COMHAIRLE NA NÒG COLOUR RUN

A day of fun at Laois Comhairle Na nÓg 's Colour Run along the grand canal in Vicarstown – their aim with this event was to create memories, raise awareness about mental health and to bring a community together. See below of some photos from the event.

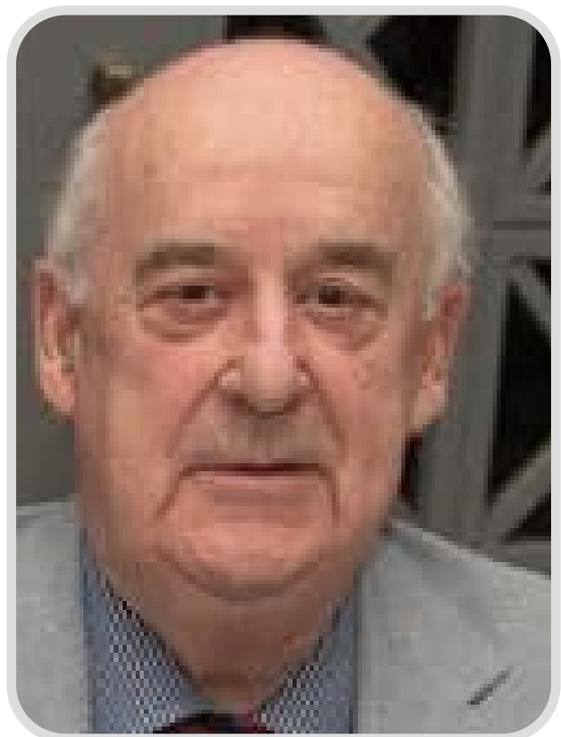


## GET WELL SOON



**Our thoughts are with our friend and Laois PPN Secretariat Member, Michael J Cobbe during his recovery.**

**Wishing Michael more strength and wellness with each coming day.**





# CONTACT US



**The Laois Public Participation Network (PPN) Office is open Monday to Friday by appointment only.**

**You can also contact us by:**



**Email:** [ppn@laoiscoco.ie](mailto:ppn@laoiscoco.ie)

**Phone:** 057 86 65661 (Office)  
086 035 2107 (Dan)



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